

Swallow Grange

The Grange, Caistor Road, Swallow, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire LN7 6DL

Unique reference number (URN): 152461

Pre-registration inspection report:

22 July 2026

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards if it is registered. It is currently operating without registration

The purpose of this inspection was to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the proposed school's likely compliance with the independent school standards and associated requirements that are required for registration as an independent school.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out pre-registration inspections of proposed independent schools, we report on the provider's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards (the standards) first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

Since September 2025, the proprietor has provided part-time alternative provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This experience has enhanced leaders' understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND, including autistic spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. In preparation for the opening of the proposed school, the proprietor has worked closely with leaders to establish a vision for the specialist education they intend to provide. They are ambitious that pupils who will attend the proposed school will experience success and become increasingly well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' safety and wellbeing are at the heart of leaders' work.

The proprietor has established clear systems to check the quality of the school's work and to hold leaders to account for the decisions they make. The proprietorial

body intends to meet on a monthly basis to offer support and challenge for leaders. In addition, a governing body will meet on a termly basis. The appointed governors have a range of relevant experience, including provision for pupils with SEND. The proprietor has clearly identified delegated responsibilities that include oversight of: the quality of education; safeguarding; pupils' outcomes; attendance and behaviour; progress towards school improvement priorities; and staff workload and wellbeing.

Leaders demonstrate the knowledge and skills they need to ensure that the school's offer meets the requirements of the standards and to fulfil key responsibilities relating to safeguarding and equality.

The standard in this part is likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Curriculum

The curriculum policy and schemes of work set out how pupils will study language, mathematics, science, technology, humanities, physical education and creative subjects from the early years to Year 6. Programmes of study set out the key learning that will provide well-sequenced lessons for pupils. For example, in history pupils will study the Stone Age before moving on to the Bronze and Iron Age. This will support pupils to develop their understanding of chronology.

Leaders have designed the curriculum with great care around pupils' ages, aptitudes and additional needs. Leaders also intend to use the information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans, alongside contributions from other professionals, to identify the extra help pupils will need to access the curriculum successfully. The proposed school will prioritise pupils' speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Staff will provide phonics lessons using a well-sequenced published programme for pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is well structured and covers the required elements, including how pupils can care for their physical and mental health. The relationships, sex and health education (RSE) policy is clear. It explains when parents and carers can withdraw their children from RSE lessons, and when they cannot. The curriculum includes topics such as different families, people who care for me, caring friendships and being safe. The PSHE programme is also supported by a life skills programme with a focus on cooking and nutrition, forest school and gardening. The curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values.

Pupils will have regular opportunities to reflect on the beliefs of others that may be different to their own and to support their understanding of respect for others.

Teaching

The proposed school has already recruited teaching staff. These staff have experience of working with pupils with SEND. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of establishing positive relationships with pupils based on kindness and respect. Pupils will be taught in small groups to facilitate the school's personalised approach.

Across the curriculum leaders will ensure that teachers support pupils to understand new concepts and to give them opportunities to apply prior learning to new learning. The proposed school intends to strengthen the curriculum through an additional therapeutic offer. For example, if needed, pupils will have access to speech and language therapy, and additional pastoral support.

Leaders have mapped out a clear monitoring and review programme to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively. This will include regular lesson visits, reviews of pupils' work and conversations with pupils about their learning. Leaders will use this information to target additional training for staff.

Assessment

Leaders have identified suitable systems for assessing pupils' starting points and tracking their progress. For example, they will complete checks on pupils' phonics knowledge so that pupils can be placed in appropriate groups. Assessment opportunities will be regular. They will be used purposefully to shape further learning and to aid teachers' understanding of misconceptions that the pupils may have so that these can be addressed.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Leaders have planned a clear programme for pupils' personal development including opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is an emphasis on supporting pupils to overcome previous negative experiences of education. The proposed school's offer will include daily opportunities for pupils to reflect on their feelings and to identify any worries or concerns that they may have. This will enable teachers to offer additional support to pupils to make sure that they are ready to learn. Pupils will be encouraged to

celebrate their own achievements, as well as recognising and celebrating the achievements of others. The school will provide a range of opportunities and experiences so that pupils' confidence grows, their self-esteem improves and their awareness of right and wrong develops.

The proposed school has ensured that the PSHE curriculum includes suitable coverage of the fundamental British values, the diversity of modern British society and information about how pupils can keep themselves safe and stay healthy in body and in mind. Pupils will take part in a wide range of events and celebrations to learn about diversity in modern Britain. Through the curriculum, they will learn about a range of religions, faiths and cultures found in modern Britain. Leaders intend to invite visiting speakers into the school to enhance this curriculum. Leaders have systems in place to ensure that visiting speakers do not promote any partisan political or extremist views. The proposed school's personal development curriculum includes cookery, gardening and outdoor learning and will emphasise life skills and preparation for adulthood.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Safeguarding

Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable and acutely aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. All safeguarding leaders have received the training they need to fulfil their roles. The proposed school has written a suitable safeguarding policy. This policy clearly sets out the systems and procedures that staff will follow to keep pupils safe, including the information they will be expected to record if they have a safeguarding concern. Staff will receive regular training to enable them to identify, and respond to, potential risks that pupils may face. This training is in line with statutory requirements and designed with the proposed school's context in mind. Safeguarding leaders have established robust systems so that they can maintain oversight of the school's safeguarding work.

The proposed school has plans in place to ensure that pupils will learn how to keep themselves safe. Safeguarding leaders have considered how staff can support pupils to explain their worries when they may struggle with communication, for example through the use of visual resources. In addition, each pupil will have a safety plan that will alert staff to pupils' individual circumstances.

Behaviour, anti-bullying and supervision of pupils

Leaders have identified a clear approach to promoting good behaviour with pupils' needs in mind. Leaders intend that staff will complete a 12-week programme to

ensure that they are increasingly well placed to support pupils to behave well and to become positive members of the proposed school and the wider community. Leaders have identified a range of rewards to motivate pupils to behave well, such as postcards home. 'Proud clouds' will also be used to celebrate pupils' individual achievements.

When needed, staff will support pupils to reflect on any poor choices that they have made. Behaviour incidents will be recorded so that leaders can identify further strategies to help pupils to behave well. The proposed school has written an exclusions policy, although leaders regard suspension as a last resort. Leaders have ensured that there are clear procedures in place for recording any use of force and restraint and will inform parents of any such incidents. All staff have received relevant training.

There is anti-bullying policy in place. This policy identifies the proposed school's response if bullying is alleged. Pupils will learn how to recognise and report bullying through the PSHE curriculum.

Leaders have already recruited a significant number of staff and will ensure that there will be adequate supervision for the proposed number of pupils throughout the school day.

Health and safety, fire and first aid

The proposed school has written a suitable health and safety policy. Its implementation will be overseen by the school operations manager. In addition, the school intends to establish a health and safety committee to maintain oversight of the school's work and to check that the school is compliant with health and safety requirements.

The proposed school has identified and trained fire marshals. In addition, all staff will complete fire awareness training. There will be daily, weekly and monthly fire checks as well as annual checks of fire safety equipment and fire detection and alarm systems. Termly practice fire evacuations will take place. Identified pupils will have a personal evacuation plan to ensure that they are well prepared to exit the school calmly and safely in an emergency. The proposed school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Leaders will ensure that trained first aiders are in place. All staff will receive first aid awareness training and identified staff will have further paediatric first aid training. Staff will receive additional training in relation to pupils' allergies to comply with the requirements of 'Benedict's Law'. The proposed school will ensure that individual risk assessments will be in place for pupils with allergies. There are well-stocked first-aid kits available throughout the school.

Admissions and attendance

Leaders have established a clear admissions policy. They will keep an admission register that meets the requirements of the standards.

Leaders will also keep a register to record pupils' attendance. They will use the codes outlined by the DfE to identify the reasons for pupils' absence. They intend to use this information to identify pupils who struggle to attend school regularly so that they can offer support to overcome the barriers that they face.

Risk assessment

The proposed school has a clear risk assessment policy that sets out how leaders will assess and manage risk. There is a range of appropriate risk assessments in place including for: the school building; the school site, including playground equipment; risks associated with pupils attempting to leave the school site. In addition, each pupil will have an individual risk assessment. The proposed school will ensure that risk assessments are regularly reviewed and amended as needed.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The recruitment checks made on staff, supply staff and the proprietor

The proprietor has ensured that sufficient leaders have completed safer recruitment training. Robust systems are in place to ensure that pre-employment checks are made in line with statutory expectations. Appropriate checks have been made for staff who are already in post, as well as contractors employed by the school. In addition, the necessary checks have been made for members of the proprietorial body and governors. Currently the proposed school does not make use of agency staff or have volunteers. Nevertheless, the proprietor demonstrates a secure understanding of the checks that are required should this change.

The single central record of these recruitment checks

The single central record (SCR) is well organised and includes the statutory information that is required by 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. The proprietor has considered how leaders will continue to review the SCR to ensure that it stays up to date as staff, and other relevant personnel, join the school.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Toilet and washing facilities, water supply, changing accommodation and showers

The proposed school has suitable toilets for the intended number of pupils, including an accessible toilet on the ground floor. The toilets provided are for the sole use of pupils and have adequate hot and cold running water. The hot water does not pose a risk of scalding so that pupils can wash their hands safely. Pupils have access to clearly labelled drinking water.

Medical room and accommodation for pupils' therapy needs

The proposed school has a dedicated medical room for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It is located beside a toilet and washing facility. There is a locked cupboard, and fridge for the storage of medicine. The school has clear systems in place for the administration of first aid and intimate care.

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils

The proposed school provides a well-maintained and inviting learning environment for pupils. It is situated over two floors with a locked cellar that pupils cannot access. The school building is well suited for the proposed capacity of up to 30 pupils. There are 5 classrooms as well as a number of other breakout spaces. Each classroom provides a suitable learning environment for up to 6 pupils. They are appropriate and welcoming spaces for the age-range of pupils that the proposed school intends to admit. There are other rooms for staff use, such as a meeting room and offices.

Leaders have ensured that consideration has been given to pupils' safety as the building has been renovated. There is a knowledgeable and experienced member of staff who has oversight of the school building and site, although there is a clear understanding that pupils' health, safety and welfare is the responsibility of all staff.

Lighting and acoustic conditions

Classrooms are well lit and most of the rooms that pupils will use have windows providing natural light. All teaching spaces have appropriate acoustics. The proposed school has external lighting to ensure that pupils, staff and visitors can enter and exit the school safely.

Outdoor space

There is plenty of outdoor space for pupils to exercise and play, including 2 large, grassed areas that are secure due to the presence of fences. Pupils have access to a range of equipment to support and encourage their play. The school intends to develop a small courtyard to provide pupils with opportunities for gardening.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 6. Provision of information

Leaders have prepared a school website to communicate to parents the information that is required by the standards. This includes the school's contact details, leadership and governance information and the school's aims and ethos. The website also provides parents with access to key policies relating to complaints, the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding. The proposed school understands its responsibility to publish further information on the website, such as Ofsted reports and any results from national testing.

Parents will receive written reports about their children's progress. In addition, leaders are planning to have regular parents' meetings to discuss the progress that pupils are making.

The proposed school has systems in place to share information with commissioning authorities. This includes reviews of EHC plans. The school will keep transparent financial records that show how each pupil's funding has been used.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The complaints policy is available on the school website. It sets out how parents can raise their concerns about the school. It explains the formal route that parents can take if they are not satisfied that their concerns have been resolved at the informal stage. The process and timescales are clear at each stage.

The school will ensure that it retains copies of complaints as well as evidence of the recommendations it has made, and action it has taken to resolve the issues raised.

The standard in this part is likely to be met if the DfE decides to register the provider as an independent school.

The school's accessibility plan

The proposed school has written a well-considered accessibility plan that meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It sets out proposed actions to increase pupils' access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information.

The school is likely to meet the regulation in this part.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the both the learning and development requirements, and the safeguarding and welfare requirements, for children in the early years. The early years curriculum is appropriate for children's stage and addresses their additional needs. It will support them to develop personal, social and emotional skills, as well as their physical and communication and language skills.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. Inspectors checked the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the chair of the proprietor body, the head of school and other members of the senior leadership team.

The school is currently operating as an unregistered alternative provision and provides part-time education for 15 pupils. All pupils have an EHC plan. The date of the first admission was 1 October 2025.

Inspectors visited lessons and spoke to pupils.

This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.

The proposed school will be based at The Grange, Caistor Road, Swallow, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, LN7 6DL.

The school will accommodate up to 30 pupils aged 4 to 11 years. It will provide education for pupils who have social, emotional or mental health needs and/or a diagnosis of autism. It is expected that all pupils will have SEND and an EHC plan.

The proposed school intends to make use of 3 unregistered alternative providers.

Lead inspector

Caroline Poole

His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector

Roxanne Fearn-Davies

His Majesty's Inspector

About this proposed school

Proprietor

Footsteps To Futures Education Limited

Chair of the proprietor body

Jayne Chudley

Headteacher

Aimee Steedman

Type of school

Other independent special school

Capacity

30

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll

Provider's current position: 0
Provider's proposal: 30

Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll

Provider's current position: 15
Provider's proposal: 0

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities on roll

Provider's current position: 15
Provider's proposal: 30

Number of pupils on roll who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority

Provider's current position: 15
Provider's proposal: 30

Age range of pupils

Provider's current position: 4 to 11
Provider's proposal: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils	Provider's current position: Mixed Provider's proposal: Mixed
Total hours operating as a school per week	Provider's current position: 15 Provider's proposal: 25
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Provider's current position: up to 15 Provider's proposal: 25
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Provider's current position: 4 Provider's proposal: 4
Number of part-time teaching staff	Provider's current position: 1 Provider's proposal: 1
Annual fees for day pupils	£94,050
Email address	swallowgrange@footstepstofutures.co.uk

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